Why Westmoreland Wishes He Had Censorship, P. 2

In Saigon, As Here, the Youth Feel There Is Something Wrong With This War

"Boo Zin Zah [?] is a 14-year old student. He and his schoolmates, he said, do not want to fight in this war. The student said he would volunteer if he was told to fight Cambodians or Communist Chinese or Russians, but not his own people. This war, he said, had no meaning. He said it is Washington's war and Peking's war."

—Saigon interview (Huntley-Brinkley show Jan. 8) reporting the opposition there to drafting 18-year olds.

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None So Blind As Those Who Will Not See

A new stage in the Vietnamese-American tragedy began with the arrests of Dr. Spock, the Rev. Coffin and the three other leaders of the draft resistance movement. We are headed for escalation—in repression at home and in war abroad. The two are the obverse sides of the same process. There is an historic fitness in the coincidence of the arrests with the Johnson Administration's campaign to fuzz, confuse and elude the possibility of peace talks opened up by Hanoi's public declaration that talks "will," rather than "could," follow an end of U.S. bombing. Our favorite headline of the period was in the *Baltimore Sun* Jan. 6. It said, "U.S. Hunting Signs Hanoi Seeks Peace. Admits Its World-Wide Search Is Without Success." Johnson and Rusk are cultivating myopia. They wouldn't be able to see a peace talk offer if Ho Chi Minh brought it personally to the White House West Gate.

Evasion by Loquacity

The Administration's search for "assurances" before ending the bombings is a pantomime for the naive. In a local New York TV program (WNBC Jan. 7) Edwin Newman asked William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern and Pacific Affairs, "Now would I be correct in deducing from what you said, that if we had an assurance there would be no increase in the movement from North to South [i.e. of troops and supplies] that that would be sufficient for us?" To which Bundy replied cryptically, "Well, that's an illustration . . . one good illustration." Newman never got a chance to interrupt Bundy's slippery loquacity long enough to ask just how many "illustrations" would be required before we would agree to talk. Fulbright cut through the fog by telling the Associated Press (*New York Post*, Jan. 9), "The Administration is only interested in surrender."

From the Administration's point of view the alarming reactions to Hanoi's offer were not those which came from friendly and neutral capitals urging us to negotiate but from the U.S. embassy in Saigon. The fear there is that any real possibility of peace talks would lead to the collapse of the South Vietnamese government. Its leading figures would make plans to follow their bank accounts into exile while the lesser men would begin to make their own deals with the NLF. Johnson escalated the war in 1965 by putting U.S. ground troops into the South to avoid a military collapse. The escalations of 1968 will be aimed to prevent a political collapse. The bombings of Russian and Chinese ships in Haiphong harbor, the air attacks on Yunnan from across the Laos border, the itch for hot pursuit into Laos and Cambodia, and the plans for an "Inchon landing" across the DMZ into North Vietnam are the familiar symptoms of that "politics of escalation" with which the Johnson Administration has countered every opportunity for peace talks in the past.

Johnson prefers a wider war to a compromise peace. Only wider war can hide from public view how quickly his pumped-up campaign of optimistic forecast has collapsed. The successful attacks all over the country on U.S. and South Vietnamese outposts and airfields, up to the very outskirts of Saigon and Danang, show how very far the enemy is from military exhaustion. Politically the Saigon government is falling apart even without peace talks. The rigged elections gave the Catholic minority a dominant position in both houses of the new legislature and seemed to assure the military junta a built-in pro-war majority. But the rejection by both houses of the military decree drafting 18-year olds shows how sick of the war even this once die-hard sector of Vietnamese opinion has become. The basic shift was plainly signalled when

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The Ultimate Issue in Spock-Coffin

"Nothing in our Constitution is plainer than that declaration of a war is entrusted only to Congress. Of course, a state of war may in fact exist without a formal declaration. But no doctrine that the court could promulgate would seem to me more sinister and alarming than that a President whose conduct of foreign affairs is so largely uncontrolled, and often even is unknown, can vastly enlarge his mastery over the internal affairs of the country by his own commitment of the Nation's armed forces to some foreign venture."

—Mr. Justice Jackson concurring in the Supreme Court's 6-to-3 decision denying President Truman the right to seize a strike-bound steel plant during the Korean war on the ground that such sweeping war powers could not be exercised in a war Congress had not declared (Youngstown v. Sawyer: 72 S. Ct. 863). *Will the Supreme Court in the Spock-Coffin cases hold that the President in an undeclared war has more power to draft men than he does under this decision to draft property rights?*

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(Continued from Page One)

Saigon's Catholic clergy called for an end of the bombing and assailed the corruption in the regime. A Buddhist-Catholic alliance against the war is now shaping up, and even the labor movement—largely created by the CIA—is swinging against us with the police attacks on the electrical workers' strike in Saigon.* The regime's mass base is dwindling to the handful of last-ditch patriots who own the brothels and the bars.

Chiang's Troops for Vietnam?

The war this year will become more than ever an American war, and our army more plainly than ever an occupying force. Escalation will require more troops, and perhaps even the dangerous step — already rumored here — of bringing in Chinese troops from Formosa, a step which would inflame Vietnamese opinion, and create more tension with mainland China. Indeed the military campaign for "hot pursuit" into Cambodia and Laos seems designed as a round-about way to force such dangerous expedients and partial mobilization. We are already short of troops to deal with the swarm of attacks all over the country, and to shore up the collapsing effort at "pacification." Any serious efforts at "hot pursuit" across the border would soon force Johnson to provide more troops even if it meant higher draft calls and mobilization of reserves in an election year. *U.S. News & World Report* estimated (Dec. 11) that the Cambodian sanctuaries could be "cleaned out" with three U.S. divisions. But to get three more divisions would require a stepup in the draft at home. This means more draft resistance and an intensified struggle in the Negro ghettoes. To shut the door on peace abroad is to invite more racial conflict at home. This is the direction of Johnson's policy and this is the larger dimension of the unfolding tragedy.

***An AP dispatch we saw only in the Washington Star Jan. 12 said six labor leaders were arrested by the police as they left a bargaining session with government officials in Saigon. Tran Quoc Buu, chairman of the Vietnamese Workers Federation, predicted the arrests would lead to a general strike by its 300,000 members. "How can we fight against the Communists under these conditions?" he told the AP. "We lose all right to fight against the Communists when things like this happen." Until now Buu and his unions have been faithful creatures of the U.S.**

Exporting the Credibility Gap

"Rome, Jan. 5—Italy's Foreign Minister today told President Johnson's special envoy that a prompt end to the Vietnam war would help solve the U.S. balance of payments problem. The President's envoy, Nicholas Katzenbach, replied that the war in Vietnam had not caused the dollar drain and had only a slight effect on the U.S. balance of payments."

—*Special from Rome,* Baltimore Sun, *Jan. 6*

"Asked how long the curbs [on the flow of dollars abroad] are to be in effect, this official answered: 'You tell me how long the Vietnam war lasts, and then I can tell you'."

—*Washington dispatch,* Wall St. Journal, *Jan. 5*

Step by step we are to lose at home all we claim to be defending abroad, from free enterprise to free speech. Already the dollar difficulties created by the war have led the Administration toward restrictions on freedom to travel, to invest and to trade. These have alarmed the business community at the same time that the Spock-Coffin indictments have inflamed the intellectual community. The next step I am convinced is a confrontation with the Negro community. Whether consciously planned for the purpose or not, the attack on such prominent draft resisters as Spock and Coffin clears the way for the indictment of Negro militants.

To incite resistance to the draft is a less serious offense than to incite race war and "burn, baby, burn." But to have made Negroes the target of the first indictment would have been too dangerous. Now that such prominent and respectable whites have been indicted it becomes easier to move against the blacks. This risks making heroes and martyrs of men whose support in the Negro community is still marginal, but considering the dependence on Negro manpower for combat troops there is no way to step up the war without stepping up the repression. A frontal confrontation with the Negro militants is all the more unavoidable if Johnson is to placate—as he seems determined to do—the pressure from Congressional rightists for firmer action against "crime in the streets" with which the struggle for full Negro equality and the struggle against the war are beginning to be identified in a growing mood of frustration. This is not the best way to deal with problems which require cool.

A TV Program Which Explains Why Westmoreland Wishes He Had Censorship

Some peace group ought to reprint as a pamphlet the transcript of a one-hour interview broadcast Jan. 8 by National Educational Television with four of the best U.S. correspondents in Vietnam: Pulitzer Prize winner Peter Arnett of the Associated Press; R. W. Apple, Jr., of the New York Times, Robert Shaplen of the New Yorker and William Tuohy of the Los Angeles Times.

Among the revelations: Gen. Westmoreland, who advised against military censorship two years ago would now recommend censorship if he had the decision to make again; that while Westmoreland and Washington take the body count seriously 'any man who's ever been in the field . . . knows there is no such thing. . . . A platoon commander fighting for his life . . . simply doesn't have time to count enemy dead" (Tuohy).

In Vietnam corruption is "a way of life" (Apple). "The corruption system begins at the very top . . . in Saigon" (Arnett) and extends to the very bottom; everybody pays the man higher up for his job and shares the graft with him. The four Corps commanders are like the Chinese warlords, the real rulers. Reporters who write stories which conflict with the optimistic views favored in Washington and Saigon are smeared and "some officials have gone so far as to suggest they're even card-carrying members of the Communist Party." (Arnett)

In the Army's own divisional newspapers "napalm doesn't exist" (Arnett); "they can't use that nasty word ambush" (Apple) and 'we never bomb a hut. We always bomb a suspected enemy structure" (Apple). There was general agreement that the Dakto fighting was (despite Westmoreland) a victory for the VC, not the U.S., since it inflicted heavy casualties on us after drawing troops from populated areas to fight under conditions most unfavorable to our side.

Westmoreland's prediction of a "phase-down" in two years? "I've been in many parts of the country," Arnett said, "And there aren't many areas in which the officials believe this is possible." Shaplen said the VC and North Vietnamese could strike anywhere they chose. We highly recommend this program for the feel of what is really happening in Vietnam.

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Thus the war threatens the social fabric of our society at home. As the months pass and the situation worsens, men like Spock and Coffin and Mitchell Goodman and Michael Ferber and Mark Raskin will begin to look more and more like the true patriots. Wider war may temporarily increase the kind of pseudo-patriotic hysteria that marks most wars in most countries. They and many like them may go to jail. Neither juries nor appellate courts can be counted on to withstand the kind of atmosphere wider war can generate. But in the longer run the moral effect of their willingness to go to jail will tell on the national mind and heart. This is an immoral and an unjust and a wickedly foolish war. Only pride and prestige keep us from backing out of it as rapidly as we can. Those who oppose it perform a sacred duty to our country and to mankind.

The Outlook in The Court

I would not diminish the stature of the challenge by the Five with a digression into the legalities. This is in that difficult area where law and morality sometimes collide. It will take more courage than I think the Supreme Court commands to bring draft resistance appeals within the protections of the First Amendment though the complexities of this conspiracy indictment may easily produce technical grounds for reversal if a jury convicts. To raise the Nuremberg issue at the trial against the war will prove difficult and is unlikely to be allowed by the trial judge. The government may hope that in Boston a jury heavily weighted with Roman Catholics may make convictions easier to obtain, but the Church's attitude is changing in Boston even as it has in Saigon and in Rome. Surprises are possible, and the doctrines of unjust war, unjust law and resistance to tyranny as obedience to God run as deep in Catholic theology as they do in the ideology of free society.

But it should never be forgotten that the ultimate appeal is to public opinion. This is where the battle will be won or lost. The strategy of the Administration is to identify resistance to the war with Negro extremism and with romantic youngsters smoking the hashish of guerrilla war. There never was such an unpopular war. There never was a war in which public opinion was so open to persuasion, so anxious about the drift of events. This potential for peace will be lost if the Administration succeeds in driving the peace movement into an hysteria of its own, an easy catharsis for our own aggressive impulses. It is essential that we keep cool. The peace movement must not become a vicarious war movement. The enemies are hatred and the imprisoning effects of military technology. We only illustrate on a big scale, commensurate with our power, the same human failings to be seen in Nigeria or in the Arab-Israel conflict. We won't help bring the country to its senses by a hate America campaign, or a hate campaign of any kind. We won't make the cause of peace more persuasive by joining forces with those who would burn the country down. We must, like a good physician or nurse in a mental ward, speak with calm and with compassion if we are to win our countrymen away from disaster. *Jan. 15, 9 a.m.*

Another Vietnam in the Philippines?

Manila, Jan. 12—The man who directs agriculture in the Philippines, Vice President Fernando Lopez, is spending thousands of dollars to import a top American society dance band and to fly in a flock of faded European nobles to help him celebrate his 40th wedding anniversary. The contrast between such flamboyant high life and the grinding low life in the provinces is one reason reform-minded politicians, socially conscious churchmen plus liberal and radical youth in the Philippines talk privately of a coming social explosion. For hundreds of thousands of Filipino peasants waiting for something to happen in the long promised land reform program, there is no money at all. . . . Guests invited to the Lopez party have been assured that three fountains will keep real French champagne flowing throughout the evening. . . . The bulk of rural families live on $75 a year.

—Peter J. Kumpa in the Baltimore Sun *Jan. 23*

PRESS-TIME BOUQUET: To Women's Strike For Peace, Jeannette Rankin and their newly organized Rankin Brigade for Peace for the best organized and most impressive peace demonstration Washington has seen in a long time.

Business Men For Peace Mobilize Retired Brass For A Bombing Halt in Vietnam

Although the New York Times, for some unaccountable reason buried the story in two paragraphs in its back pages, the 4-month old organization, Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace pulled off a publicity coup when it got 5 retired Generals and an Admiral to form its military advisory committee and to call for an end of the bombing in North Vietnam and de-escalation in the South.

The Washington and Baltimore press gave the story a good play (Jan. 12) but elsewhere it was ignored or muffled, though the press conference was made all the more newsworthy by the appearance among the dissident military of the foremost U.S. military expert on Communist China, Brig. Gen. Samuel B. Griffith, a retired Marine who recently translated Mao Tse-tung's treatise on guerrilla war. Gen. Griffith won a Ph.D. at Oxford for work in Chinese military history and is now a research fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institute.

U.S. hawks like to quote Mao's remark about power coming out of the mouth of a gun. Gen. Griffith put this in truer perspective by stressing Mao's precept that "politics should control the gun." The retired Marine said that our war effort in South Vietnam should have been 70% political and only 30% military but was instead "about 90% military." He said the bombing of the North had "no decisive effect whatever" on the fighting in the South, that it was to Peking's advantage to bog the U.S. down in Vietnam and that the war wasn't worth the commitment required to win it. Gen. Griffith said he estimated more than two years ago that victory would require 750,000 men "and now it's probably more."

Harold Willens, the Los Angeles real estate man who is co-chairman of the business-for-peace group, accused the Administration of "a mindless paralysis." The other military assembled by the business men for their military advisory committee are Gen. David M. Shoup, former Marine Corps Commandant; Brg. Gen. Robert L. Hughes, who was on MacArthur's staff in World War II; Brig. Gen. W. W. Ford, an artilleryman who commanded an Army division in Europe in that war, and Rear Admiral Arnold E. True, a destroyer commander who was wounded in the Battle of Midway.

The new military committee might perform a valuable function if it invited confidential communications from soldier critics serving in Vietnam.

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While Deploring A Frameup in Moscow, Will They Overlook One in Newark?

A Challenge to the Liberalism-At-A-Distance of U.S. Editors

We hope those U.S. editors waxing eloquent on the writers convicted in Moscow will spare a little energy to look into the conviction here of the Negro poet LeRoi Jones in the aftermath of the Newark riots. We are against political trials of writers anywhere. The hopeful side of the new Moscow trials is the increased daring of Soviet citizens in defying the secret police both outside the court and in talking with foreign correspondents. An ugly smell of plain old-fashioned frame-up and vigilanteism exudes from that Moscow courtroom in which Galanskov, Ginzburg, Dobrovolsky and Lashkova have been convicted and we urge protest by American writers against the verdict.

Beat Himself Up?

But for most U.S. editorial writers to condemn the Moscow trials is only an easy exercise of cold war reflexes. We'd have them prove their sincerity by a close look at the Jones trial. That doesn't smell like a rose, either. Jones's heavily bandaged face appeared in the nation's press after his arrest during the Newark riot. Police admitted he didn't resist arrest but denied beating him, though witnesses testified they had seen the beating. We find it hard to believe he beat himself up.

Police claimed, after they non-beat him, that they had found guns in his car. Jones insisted at the trial that he had never owned a gun. Yet the prosecution made no effort to rebut his testimony by tracing the ownership of the guns. On top of this, Judge Leon Kapp in his instructions to an all-white jury seemed to think Jones was on trial for possessing deadly poems rather than deadly weapons. The Judge dwelt on the "diabolical" character of a poem by Jones in *The Evergreen Review*. This seemed to be the emotional basis for the severity of the sentence: two-and-a-half to three years. A group of 12 prominent U.S. poets have formed a Committee on Poetry (PO Box 582 Stuyvesant Station, NYC 9) to back an appeal and we think it deserves wide support.

We'll hardly allay this gifted Negro writer's racial bitterness by sending him to prison after such a trial.

On Private Enterprise and the Slums

"Meanwhile the demand for profit—and a reluctance to take unnecessary risks—continues to be a source of resistance or passivity among many in the business community when the subject is social action. A recent survey, by the Fantus company, a subsidiary of Dun & Bradstreet, found that more than 100 companies of 700 major corporations indicated a willingness to build new plants in or near slum areas. But not one said it would do so under present conditions. The implication was that they would invest in slum areas if the slums were eradicated."

—Somewhat astringent conclusion to an article in the New York Times *Annual Business Review Jan. 8 glowingly headlined "Crisis in the Slums: Business Rolls Up A Sleeve After A Summer of Rioting."*

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

With this, the 16th year of publication, I am reluctantly compelled to go bi-weekly as a means of cutting down the burden of what has been almost entirely a one-man writing operation. I ask readers to bear with me while I try this means of adjustment.

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